

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-02 SCA-01 SCS-03 DPW-01 /090 W

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R 021724Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2619

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 19516

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PFOR, SREF, VS, FR, VN

SUBJECT: FRENCH AIR LIFT FROM SAIGON

REFS: (A) BANGKOK 19060; (B) PARIS 19196

1. PARIS 19196 APPARENTLY CROSSED BANGKOK 19060.
ACCORDING TO THE QUAI, FRENCH EMBASSY BANGKOK DOES
NOT KNOW THE FULL STATE OF PLAY WITH THE VIETNAMESE
SINCE IT IS NOT KEPT INFORMED ABOUT FRENCH CONTACTS
WITH THE DRV. EMBASSY BANGKOK SHOULD THEREFORE
INTERPRET FRENCH EMBASSY REPDRITS IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT
THE QUAI INFORMSS US HERE, PARTICULARLY AS CONCERNS
CONTACTS WITH HANOI.

2. QUAI BLAMES THE RTG AS WELL AS THE HK GOVERNMENT
FOR PREVENTING THE MAINTENANCE FLIGHT DESPITE THE
VIETNAMESE OVERFLIGHT PERMISSION, WHICH HAD CLEARLY
BEEN GRANTED.

3. PERMISSION FOR THE JULY 1 TO 10 FLIGHTS, TO REPLACE
THOSE WHICH DID NOT TAKE PLACE THE END OF JUNE, WAS
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ARRANGED AT THE UNOFFICIAL "WORKING" LEVEL IN SAIGON.

THE FRENCH HERE WERE NOT PARTICULARLY SURPRISED WHEN THE JULY 1 FLIGHT WAS TURNED BACK SINCE OCCASIONALLY THE FRENCH FLIGHTS HAVE BEEN TURNED BACK BEFORE WITHOUT ANY EXPLANATION. THE FRENCH ARE WAITING TO FIND OUT WHETHER THE JULY 2 FLIGHT WAS PERMITTED TO LAND IN IGON, AND IF NOT, THE FRENCH WILL MAKE AN INSISTENT DEMARCHE IN HANOI ABOUT THE JULY 1 - 10 FLIGHTS.

4. THE GOV EMBASSY IN HANOI IS ALSO CONTINUING ITS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DRV ABOUT FLIGHTS TO COMPLETE THE EVACUATION. IN ADDITION TO THE BRUISED SENSITIVITIES CITED IN REF B AS A REASON FOR THE VIETNAMESE REFUSAL TO EXTEND THE FLIGHTS AUTOMATICALLY, THE QUAI THINKS THE VIETNAMESE WISH TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE FRENCH -- AND FRENCH CITIZENS IN VIETNAM -- TO COMPLETE THE WITHDRAWAL MORE RAPIDLY. THE FRENCH NOW FEEL THE VIETNAMESE WISH TO CLOSE THIS CHAPTER AND SHUT OFF THIS DIRECT TIE BETWEEN SAIGON TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD RATHER SOON. ANOTHER QUAI SOURCE, NOT CHAYET, THEREFORE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) MIGHT WISH MORE FREQUENT FLIGHTS RATHER THAN THE THREE A WEEK WHICH CHAYET THOUGHT MIGHT BE THE COMPROMISE POSITION. THE INITIAL SIGNALS GIVEN IN HANOI ABOUT THE RESUMPTION OF FLIGHTS HAVE BEEN FAVORABLE, AND PERHAPS THE 25 FLIGHTS REQUIRED TO EVACUATE THE 2,000 OUT OF THE 2,800 WHO REALLY WISH TO LEAVE SAIGON WILL BE ARRANGED FAIRLY SOON. (THE ABOVE FIGURES APPARENTLY INCLUDE THE CLOSE RELATIVES OF THE FRENCH BEING REPATRIATED AS WELL AS FRENCH CITIZENS.)

5. SINCE THE END OF THE FRENCH FLIGHTS WILL GREATLY COMPLICATE THE DEPARTURE OF AMERICANS AND THEIR CLOSE RELATIVES FROM SAIGON, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE SITUATION TO SUPPLEMENT EMBASSY BANGKOK'S GOOD COVERAGE. THE SITUATION COULD BECOME MORE URGENT FOR US AS WELL IF THE QUAI VIEW IS CORRECT THAT THE SRV WISHES TO EXPEDITE THE DEPARTURE OF "FOREIGNERS" IN ORDER TO SHUT OFF SAIGON.

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